



“From Nothing-Comes a light”

Artist Jenny Kock opens his home and heart to visitors with his first solo exposition

An informal gathering in Kadushi Largo on Sunday evening marked the opening of the first one-man show by artist Jenny Lorenzo Kock, who many island visitors may know from attending Aruba's weekly Bon Bini Festival on Tuesday evenings.

Minister of Culture, Labor and Sport, Ramon Lee attended the opening of Jenny's work, and pronounced himself honored to be asked to cut the ribbon along with Glenda Reiziger of the Instituto di Cultura, which officially opened the exposition. Before entering to view Jenny's collected works, Master of Ceremonies Stanley Dabian introduced Jenny's mother, Dora, who spoke on his behalf. The reason for this is that in his youth Jenny was the victim of an accident that affected his motor capabilities and power of speech, so he is "uncomfortable" with making speeches. Dora told of how Jenny "found himself" with art, and a way to express his emotions, delight with the beauty of nature, and his profound faith. Dora declared there could not be a mother more proud of her son/ Before entering the house/studio, Jenny's sister Magriet Kelkboom performed an interpretive dance that exemplified the process of overcoming a disability to finally grow and blossom in one's talent.

The exhibition of works fill the walls of Jenny's house, and one makes their way through the living room, kitchen and finally to the studio to examine the pieces that span every subject. Jenny's primitive and colorful style is expressed in still life, self-portraits and a favorite subject, Aruba's nature. Though on the surface they appear to be simply representative work, a number show a very subtle mind behind the art. In particular, a portrait of his studio with a work in progress, and a painting of a broken glass, which is titled "Jenny."

A singular but notable work that dates from April of 1989 is one of the few monotone pieces in the collection, and it depicts an open door looking out to a bright sun, with what appears to be a beckoning arm. In Papiamentu are written the words, "God has opened a door for me," and the simple piece conveys his profound faith, along with gratitude for finding a means of expressing emotions that most of us can only ponder.

Jenny began creating his works at the age of nineteen, and started attending the Bon Bini Festival as a working artist in November of 1986. He usually creates his scenes of Aruba before spectators and potential clients in pastels during the festivals. Though his home is rather out of the way, located in a corner of Aruba called Kadushi Largo, he insisted on using it as a venue rather than a conventional gallery, as he felt that welcoming the community into the environment where he is inspired and creates was an important part of the exposition. It is well worth the trip into Aruba's cunucu to view his charming little atelier at Kadushi Largo 13-A, and the collection. His work will be on display until August 11, in the mornings from 10:00 AM until noon and in the evenings from 7:00 until 9:00 PM. Jenny is happy to welcome all into his home and his life to share his passion and love of art. For more information regarding hours and directions to his studio contact the Instituto di Cultura at telephone #582-2185. Additionally, some tour operators will be including his studio on their tours, and the names of these operators can be obtained from the Instituto di Cultura, ask either for Stanley Dabian or Glenda when calling for information. Jenny's mother, Dora, will continue to show his works at the Bon Bini Festival on Tuesdays for the duration of the exposition, and then he will return to create his beautiful pieces for island visitors.

In his address to the gathering for the opening of Jenny's exposition, Minister Lee credited Jenny not only as a talented artist, but also as an example to those that are handicapped to have faith, courage and "never give up." His life and works are not only beautiful, but also inspiring, and deserving of recognition on many levels, as they were when he won the "Aruba Gold Medal, 1977-1990," which he displays in an honored place in his living room.